

Red-tailed Tropicbirds return to the Abrolhos Islands — The last time Red-tailed Tropicbirds were recorded as nesting on the Abrolhos Islands was during 1954. Since then there has been only sporadic sightings of birds flying over.

In December 1987 a group of us observed three Red-tailed Tropicbirds flying above Pelsaert Island. One of these birds was seen to take off from the ground towards the southern end of the island. A search did not result in the finding of a nesting site. However, a recently killed bird was found at the base of the lighthouse.

On the 3rd December, 1988, in company with another group of birdwatchers, I was delighted to see Red-tailed Tropicbirds once more nesting on the Abrolhos Islands — about 70 metres from a breeding colony of Crested Terns.

Surrounded by small scrub and spinifex I found a single bird sitting on one egg. This location was in the same area that I had searched the previous year. The bird sat tightly on its egg allowing us to observe it closely. Its colour with pink tones to the feathers was indeed beautiful.

In my search endeavouring to locate more nesting birds, it became evident that they had tried to breed during the previous year, as I found the remains of an adult on a nest scrape close by. Another empty scrape from the same period could indicate a successful breeding.

During the course of the day, up to five Red-tailed Tropicbirds at one time were observed in the air.

When visiting Pelsaert Island a week later on the 10th December 1988, the bird was still sitting on its nest and five birds were once again observed in the air.

— KEVIN COATE, 21 Acanthus Road, Willetton, WA 6155

White-tailed Black Cockatoos on Rottnest Island — On Tuesday 24th January 1989 at approximately 8.40 a.m. while conducting a bird walk, three White-tailed Black Cockatoos were sighted.

They were on the Rottnest Golf Course and swooped in front of the group on their way to the Norfolk Island Pines that line the course. There was no mistaking the birds as they were so close, and as they flew they gave their very distinctive cry. The weather was extremely windy — strong easterlies — so my guess was they had been blown across from the mainland.

— STEPHANIE WINNETT, Mariginiup, WA 6065